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THE PALACE

A COLLECTION OF CHINESE

AND

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THE PALACE

THE BELLS:
A COLLECTION OF CHIMES.

BY

T. B. A.

"I thought how like these chimes
Are the Poet's airy rhymes,
All his rhymes and roundelays,
His conceits, and songs, and ditties,
From the Belfry of his brain!"

BELFRY OF BRUGES.

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TO
MY MOTHER.

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P R O E M .

PROEM.

I. THE CHRISTENING.

I've christened these, my poesies, THE BELLS,
Because there is, or should be, in all rhymes,
A music soft and silv'ry as the chimes
That float at evening through the twilight dells,
Born in the belfry of some village church,
Hid by the ivy clamb'ring from its porch.

Because some verses have a solemn roll,
Sweetly sad, a melancholy swelling,
Like the deep bells of a cathedral, telling
The sad departure of another Soul
For the Eternal City ! that far shore,
Where, like a sea, Time breaketh evermore !

Because in Bells there something is to me
 Of rhythms and the poets of gone years—
 A sad reverberation, breeding tears,
 Touching the finer chords of memory!
 Bells be the name! may their vibrations clear,
 Fall in mild cadences upon thine ear!

II. TO MY FRIENDS.

YE friends that gild my humbler way!
 Ye stars that brighten year by year!
 I know your hearts are with him here
 Who seeks to tread a wider sphere;
 I know the words that ye would say.

And thou, O friend! I have not seen!
 Whose hand has never grasped my own,
 Whose ear has never caught a tone
 From lips of mine, to whom I'm known
 In thoughts, and not by form or mien;

May I not hope some passing tone
 May start thy sleeping memory,
 May bring some clouded joy to thee?
 'Twere sweet to know, though strangers we,
 Thy heart is chiming with my own!

THE BELLS.

THE
LIBRARY OF THE
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
AND
ZOOLOGY
OF THE
CITY OF LONDON

TO THE
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PRELUDE

TO THE STEEPLE OF ST. AYNE.

THE snow was on the house-top,
And on the poplars tall ;
And the fire-light's hand was tracing
Weird pictures on the wall ;

And nearer to the embers
I drew my little chair,
And gazing on the winking logs
I saw wild figures there.

Sometimes it was a castle
With turrets all a-gleam ;
A draw-bridge, stretching like an arm,
Across the molten stream ;

Gonfalons, and warriors
 Encased in armor red ;
 And all the legends I had heard,
 Came trooping thro' my head.

I thought of ruins hoary
 Beside the Danube's wave,
 Of Vogelweid whose treasures fed
 The birds around his grave.

I thought of shadows sleeping
 Around the Rodenstein ;
 And tales that hover bird-like o'er
 The silver river Rhine.

And melody stole on me
 Like a sweet midnight chime ;
 And 'mong the branches of my brain
 I found this nest of rhyme.

THE STEEPLE OF ST. AYNE.

You'll see it through the hemlock boughs,
 As down the moorland road you pass,
 Standing ghostly, brown and still
 In the shadow of a hill.

There is not a pane of glass
 In any of the carven sashes ;
 But thick around them, like eye-lashes,
 Hang the cobwebs old and gray !
 In and out those glassless sockets,
 Floats the lazy sun all day.
 I have often heard it said
 Hair grows on the confined dead :
 I know not if it be so ;
 But upon the belfry's crown,
Mosses of a dappled brown
 And many curious colors grow !

In the steeple, where the swallows
 Dart, like lightning, to and fro,
 Swings the ponderous bell, which monks
 In that tower long ago,
 Hung with many pater nosters,
 Chanted hymns and litanies !
 Praying when, at eve, it swung
 Between its lips its iron tongue,
 What it said might reach far cities
 And their sinful inmates save ;
 Telling with its solemn tolling
 Time was ever, ever knolling
 Mortals to the cold, damp grave !

As I stand, the twilight with me,
 In the Steeple of St. Ayne,
 Far I wander in the regions
 Of the misty Land of Legends,
 Painting pictures on my brain.
 Olden scenes came back to me;
 The past throws off its dusty shroud.—
 The Abbot and the monkish train
 In the old cathedral crowd,
 Filling aisles and niches dim
 With their pious murmuring;
 And, as silver censers swing,
 Swells and sinks their evening hymn.
 To the gorgeous frescoed dome—
 Paintings, brought from holy Rome—
 Floats in clouds the soft perfume;
 While the pensive evening gloom,
 With a foot that seems to falter,
 Mounts the carved steps of the altar,
 Standing silently beside
 An image of the Crucified!
 Now the solemn chant of souls
 Through gallery and cloister rolls!
 While, as if with sudden pain,
 Dolorous the Curfew tolls
 In the Steeple of St. Ayne.

Now I see a marriage *cortège*,
 Mailed knights and cavaliers ;
 Reeling plumes and glist'ning lances ;
 Maidens with their stolen glances ;
 Dames in kirtles of brocade—
 All the pomp of other years.
 Then the bride in white arrayed,
 Milky roses on her brow,
 White and beautiful as snow,
 While her deep and blond eyes glisten
 As the beams from Dian's bow.
 On her bosom, budding forth
 Like lilies from the pregnant earth,
 Gems, as rich as those of Ind,
 From the caverns of the East,
 Rise and fall at every breath
 As she gives her hand beneath
 The benediction of the priest.
 Hushed the epithalamium !
 All the gaudy train is gone,
 Priest, choragus ; and deep Silence
 Sits within the pews alone !

And, now through the open door
 Streams the sunshine on the floor,
 Throwing sparkles where the dismal,
 Breathless shadows moped before.

By the marble urn baptismal,
Standeth two to whom is given
A revelation late from heaven!
A piece of clay! a little breath!
A form to toil and bear its cross
Like the Christ of Nazareth!

Now I see a funeral train,
Passing sorrowful and slow
Through the chiseled portico,
Where are shadows sad and solemn
Cast by many a fluted column.
To the altar's front they bear
Their lifeless charge and leave it there.
At the feet and at the head
Of the shrived and shrouded dead,
Candles burn. The sunlight's fingers,
Dipped in the window's hues,
Throw an iridescent light
On the coffin, and it lingers
Till the gibbous moon at night,
Looking through that painted window,
Throws her lovelier tints below.
Mournfully the funeral train,
Tearful, sad and slow,
Passes thro' the porch again,

While the bell within the steeple,
Throbbeth like a heart in wo !

'Tis gone ! 'tis gone ! I am alone,
With the calm, starry night alone,
In the old Steeple of St. Ayne !
The chanting, hooded monks are gone ;
The marriage train has sought the regions
Of the misty Land of Legends ;
And the sunshine through the door
Sleepeth not upon the floor ;
And the dead one, borne so slow
Through the friezed portico,
Has come back again
To the charnel of my brain !
O'er these shadows—shadows all—
Reality has thrown a pall.
Yet the steeple loometh still
In the shadow of the hill ;
Standing, shattered, yet sublime—
A tombstone to departed Time !

CHATTERTON.

I.

THIS eve my heart is floating upon tears,
A fallen rose-leaf floating on a stream.
In the dim shadow of departed years
I have been lying with a saddened dream—
A dream of poor, poor CHATTERTON !
That soul which, like the thousand-lanced
sun,
Ate itself into night ! that monarch soul !
Which foamed and muttered like the sobbing
sea,
And broke a heart that it could not control.
Poor CHATTERTON ! who does not weep for
thee ?

What bosom melts not at the mournful tale
 Of thy short, fevered life ? Thou diedst in
 scorn,
 Like the proud moon that doth majestic sail
 The ebon night, and sinks before the dawn.

II.

As the soft snow comes down
 And fills each secret nook,
 Robing the ice-stilled brook
 And the house-tops of the town,
 And the chimneys as they look,
 With open mouths, to all
 The flakes, till in a pall
 Of white the earth is hid ;
 So did Ambition creep
 Upon the child unbid.
 Each grotto of his heart
 It filled, each crevice deep,
 E'en as the eye its lid.
 'Twas of his soul a part.

III.

'Twas twilight ebb, and the boy was sitting
 In a deep recess of the gothic hall ;
 Wildest thoughts across his heart were flitting,
 Wild as the tracery upon the wall.

Upon a stair of stars the Night came down,
 With footfalls noiseless as the stealthy air,
 And like a mantle wrapped the shouldered
 town ;
 And still the child sat dreaming, brooding
 there.

The moon sleeked “anciente” Bristol with her
 beams,
 And from St. Mary’s swelled the midnight
 chime ;
 Still sat the boy, his hot brain moulding dreams
 Which cluster, star-like, on the sky of Time !

*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*

v.

Morn broke on restless London, like a sea,
 In rippling waves of light ; the sun sent all
 The sleepy stars to bed. The great city
 Was awakened to wrangle in its thrall
 Of crime and servitude ; and in its streets,
 Through which the pulse of greedy Traffic beats,
 The crier’s voice mixed with the rattling
 wheel ;

And all the vast machinery din
 Went on as if from out that place of sin
 In the cold night, a spirit did not steal,
 Winging its way thro' Heaven's starry fires,
 To rest forever on th' eternal shore.
 Morn broke on London, crowning all its spires
 With gold—but CHATTERTON! he was no
 more.

VI.

In coffin roughly nailed,
 They placed his boyish form
 While yet his blood was warm,
 His forehead scarcely paled ;
 And bore him quick along
 Amid the heedless throng.
 Ah ! cruel hands that laid
 That little weary frame
 Within the grave they made,*
 With nought to tell his name ;
 It should not have been so ;
 No pauper ground should own
 That *shattered casket*, tho'
 The *gem* itself is gone !

* He was cast into the burying-ground of Shoe-lane Work-house—the pauper's burying-ground—the end, so far as his clayey tabernacle was concerned, of all his dreamy greatness.

—MRS. S. C. HALL.

H. W. L.

LIKE him of old, whose touch divine
 Drew water from the senseless stone,
 Thy words have drawn a silver tone
 Of music from this heart of mine.

O Poet-soul ! O gentle one !
 Thy thought has made my darkness light ;
 The solemn Voices of the Night
 Have filled me with an inner tone.

Their echoes linger on my ear ;
 The footsteps of the Angels come
 Thro' the long entry to my room ;
 I almost fancy that I hear

A low, sweet breathing at the door,
 And do not dare to move, for I
 Would not dispel the fantasy
 That grows upon me more and more.

To gain that near, that far off shore
 We only cross a bridge of Sleep ;
 That bridge sinks not into the deep,
 When we have passed, for evermore.

The unfleshed dead can cross again
 Unto this sphere. O ! I am sure
 They're near us, when high thoughts and
 pure,
 Like monarchs, pace our chamber'd brain.

O Bard of Shadows ! thine the art
 To lead us through the realm of dreams,
 Robing the Real until it seems
 Of the fair Ideal a part.

I'll drink thy praise in olden wine,
 And in the cloak of fine conceite
 I'll tell thee how my pulses beat,
 How half my being runs to thine.

CRESCENT CITY AT NIGHT.

SEEN FROM THE FRENCH CATHEDRAL AT PLACE
D'ARMES.

How grand to sit in this old steeple high,
And view the city with its veins of streets !
A muffled sound, like troubled winds that die,
Mounts to the house-tops and in space re-
treats.

The soot-faced chimneys whisper far beneath
With heads half hidden in their smoky breath !

Now, as Night draws her counterpane of black,
And tucks it closely round the horizon,
The lamp-fringed streets are lighted one by
one—

Each seems a serpent with a glossy back !
With spectral fingers quiv'ring in the air,
The churches point to where "our Father"
dwells ;

Ava Maria from the tongues of bells
Floats to the zenith and the angels there,
Who, crowned with asphodel and twilight dim,
Are messengers between this world and Him !

SONG OF A HEART.

YE who love Nature, and in Nature, God,
 Listen to one whose heart is full of song
 And gratitude unto his very lips.

His music is not art-born ; it leaps forth
 Untutored, like the daisies of the spring,
 Or brooks that babble of their own free will.

In the sweet faces of the buds I see
 The God that swings this flower-scented sphere,
 Like a great censer, in the purple void !

I have a sense within me that perceives
 His Presence in the blowing wind, and in
 The footsteps of the crystal-footed Rain !

To him that holdeth Nature near his heart,
The brooks are hymning praises, and the sea
Is ever rolling some grand anthem forth !

The grass that comes in April to the mounds
In grave-yards, and the vines that creep along
The humble porch of village churches, are

So many fingers pointing up to God !
So many holy monitors that tell
His majesty in silent eloquence !

O, Pilgrim to the Unseen Land ! if thou
Art thirsty for the Living Waters ; if
Thy lips do hunger for the Bread of Life,

And yet thou fearest “ the cold feel of death,”
The grave—that gate-way to eternity
And Paradise—love Nature, for 'tis God.

THE ANGEL.

O! MEMORY, the painter!
 Limns upon my brain
 The faces of beloved ones
 I'll never see again!

There is one sainted picture—
 O, fancy keep it near!—
 'Mid golden hair, Madonna eyes,
 Serene, and deep, and clear.

We knew she was an Angel,
 We knew she could not stay!
 And long we waited tearfully
 To see her fly away!

We knew that she was passing
Thro' life untouched, serene,
As far from earth's impurities
As Christ from Magdalene.

The Angels wearied for her,
And so from Paradise
Death came, and kissed her tenderly,
His hand upon her eyes !

And as a flower at evening
Folds its leaves to rest,
She meekly crossed her whitened hands
Upon her peaceful breast :

Laid so white and beautiful,
So full of holy trust,
It seemed a shame to lay so pure
A flower in the dust.

We saw no seraph's pinions,
We saw no mystic things ;
But going from our hearts we felt
An Angel's rustling wings !

FANNIE.

FANNIE has the sweetest foot
 Ever in a gaiter boot !
 And the hoyden knows it,
 And, of course, she shows it,—
 Not the knowledge, but the foot,—
 Yet with such a modest grace,
 Never seems it out of place,
 Ah, there are not many
 Half so sly, or sad, or mad,
 Or wickeder than Fannie.

Fannie has the blackest hair
 Of any of the village girls ;
 It does not shower on her neck
 In silken or coquettish curls.

It droops in folds around her brow,
 As clouds, at night, around the moon,
 Looped with lilies here and there,

In many a dangerous festoon.
 And Fannie wears a gipsy hat,
 Saucily—yes, all of that!

Ah, there are not many
 Half so sly, or sad, or mad,
 Or wickeder than Fannie.

Fannie wears an open dress—

Ah! the charming chemisette!
 Half concealing, half revealing
 Something far more charming yet.
 Fannie drapes her breast with lace,
 As one would drape a costly vase
 To keep away mischievous flies;
 But lace can't keep away one's eyes,
 For every time her bosom heaves,

Ah, it peepeth through it;
 Yet Fannie looks the while as if
 Never once she knew it.

Ah, there are not many
 Half so sly, or sad, or mad,
 Or innocent as Fannie.

Fannie lays her hand in mine ;

Fannie speaks with *naïveté*,

Fannie kisses me, she does !

In her own coquettish way.

Then softly speaks and deeply sighs,

With angels nestled in her eyes.

In the merrie month of May,

Fannie swears sincerely

She will be my own, my wife,

And love me dearly, dearly

Ever after all her life.

Ah, there are not many

Half so sly, or sad, or mad,

As my true-hearted Fannie.

MAUD OF ALLINGGALE.

PART I.

I.

THE wind was toying with her hair,
As on the turret top she stood;
Her gaze was on the bending wood,
And in her eyes a dim despair.
Moaning Ænone, sad and pale,
Sweet Psyche when her love had gone
Were not more tearful or forlorn
Than Maud of Allingdale.

II.

And "Ah," she said, "he will not come!
And I have waited all the day."

Afar she saw the ocean spray,
 Like lances glimmer in the gloom.
 And then the moon came sideling up
 Deep set within a milky girth :
 And at the zenith turned on earth
 Like an inverted cup.

III.

Two moons o'er sleeping earth had bent,
 Then stately through the heavens strode,
 Since Walter from the castle rode
 Armed *cap-à-pie* for tournament :
 "O Maud of Allinggale !" he said,
 "A little while and I will come,"
 And fondly o'er her drooped the plume
 That floated from his head.

IV.

She heard his footsteps on the floor,
 She saw him thro' the forest leaves,
 The orange sunshine on his greaves ;
 And he was gone—for ever more ;
 For in the heart of that green wood,
 Unknown, unseen by mortal eyes,
 The Castle of a Thousand Dyes
 Of fairy Monok stood.

V.

This queen immortal loved the knight,
 And so she sent an airling brood
 To lead him thro' the bosky wood
 Until he knew no left nor right;
 And as he paused upon a steep
 That rose from out a fountain place,
 They sprinkled dew-drops on his face,
 And so he fell asleep.

VI.

And two white-breasted wood-nymphs took
 The dreaming youth in their soft arms,
 And bore him where a row of Palms
 Shaddowed a draw-bridge on the brook;
 And 'tween two cedars, old and gaunt,
 Their summits tinged with yellow light,
 They passed, and bore the sleeping knight
 Into the fairy haunt.

VII.

They took the helmet from his brow,
 Unlaced his breast-plate, white as milk,
 And draped him with a robe of silk
 Glittering like a frozen snow !

And in his coat of mail instead
 They placed a form like Walter's made,
 And laid it in the forest glade
 As though that he were dead.

PART II.

I.

When Walter woke his dream-filled eyes
 Were dazzled with the rainbow light;
 "St. George!" he cried, "I'm lost to sight
 And sense, be this not Paradise!"
 He heard the trembles of a lute,
 He saw the fountains leap in air,
 And spread around him everywhere
 The most delicious fruit.

II.

And chalices ambrosial brimmed,
 Flagon of the costliest wine
 Fresh from the vineyards of the Rhine,
 And honey from the richest skimmed;

Rich cordials full of golden eyes ;
 And delicacies of all isles,
 Scattered around him, in huge piles
 Lay like wrecked argosies.

III.

The trilling of a thousand birds
 Burst on him with canorous swells,
 And the faint tinkling of far bells
 Came rustling through his sense's chords.
 The walls were rough with priceless stones,
 The window niches diamond-laid,
 And the long fluted colonnade
 Was girt with wealth of zones.

IV.

And there were halls so vast and deep
 The eye could scarcely reach half through ;
 E'en music's echo weary grew,
 And tripping through them fell asleep !
 Upon his raptured senses stole
 The rarest perfume of the spheres
 Rich with the crystal, star-born tears
 Found in the rose's bowl.

v.

“What mystic things will fancy do!”

He said, and, as he spoke, white hands
Undid the glitt’ring silver bands
That held a gorgeous curtain to,
And drawing back the silken screen
His eyes beheld, on throne of gold,
Like Egypt’s courtesan of old,
Monok, the fairy Queen.

vi.

“O! thou that sittest goddess like!”

He, kneeling, cried before the throne,
“Tell me if all my brain be gone!
And what these wondrous scenes that strike
My fancy captive? Whence thou art?
And whence this dulcet melody?
These nectar-laden gales, and why
This rustling in my heart?”

vii.

Then rich she made him with a smile,
And sweeping from her throne with pride,
She laid her hand on his and sighed,
Half laughing at him all the while;

And to his ear bent down her head,
 With voice that had a cymbal's ring
 "Sir Knight of Ainsworth thou art king
 Of this domain!" she said.

VIII.

She led him to the 'nameled throne,
 And placed a crown upon his brow,
 And kneeling at his footstool low,
 "Sir Knight," she said, "I am thine own!"
 Her breath, like a soft summer gale
 Nursed in the heart of some sweet grot,
 Was on his cheek, and he forgot
 His Maud of Allinggale!

 PART III.

I.

As Lady Maud, heart-sick and pale,
 From Ainsworth's tower watched that night,
 She saw a strange and flick'ring light
 Moving across the darkened vale;

And nearer, nearer still it came,
 Until she saw amid the gloom
 The floating of a snowy plume.
 Her lips half breathed a name.

II.

And down the spiral stair she sped,
 And in the long torch-lighted hall
 She saw upon a bloody pall
 Walter of Ainsworth, lying dead.
 O! wild and mournful was her wail!
 Pale Venus when Adonis died
 Had not a sorrow wilder-eyed,
 Than Maud of Allinggale.

III.

“Whose hand did this?” and then a flood
 Of tears o’er her eyelids broke;
 And thus the knight of Lydwick spoke:
 “We found him slain in yonder wood,
 His red blood mingling with the brook,
 And his large thoughtful, staring eyes
 Fixed on a cloudlet in the skies
 With melancholy look.

iv.

“ We know not how Sir Walter fell ;
But if 'twas in concerted fight,
We know he fell like a true knight.
Who struck the blow, it were not well
That he a knight of Ainsworth meet ;
We 'd teach him that our Walter's death
Has made ten swords in each sheath,
And he should kiss our feet !”

v.

Then Lady Maud bent down her head
Upon the image's cold breast,
Like one that lieth down to rest ;
They spoke to her, but she was dead !
Ah, why prolong the saddened tale ?
In Ainsworth chapel, side by side,
Lies Walter's armor and his bride,
Sweet Maud of Allingdale.

T O M A R I E .

As sea-shells whisper of the sleepless sea,
 Memory whispers of the past and you,
 Charming my bosom with its melody.
 Those summer nights, which all too quickly
 flew,
 Like singing birds upon their noiseless wings,
 Ghost-like rise up before me, and I turn
 To sip the chalice pleasing mem'ry brings.
 There is one eve I cherish in my breast
 Like holy water in a marble urn :
 The sun was treading to the yawning West—
 To that great grave-yard of the buried Days !
 And at our feet a devious river rolled,
 Squirming and gliding in the sunset's blaze,
 Like a great serpent with a skin of gold !

We had been reading a young Bard, who'd
stemmed

The sea of criticism, and unfurled
His daring colors to a charmed world ;
In his rich heart our poorer hearts were hem-
med.

Your voice was full of tears, and there stood
Two, trembling, on the threshold of your eyes.
O ! much, my friend, I envied him who could
Lure two such angels out of paradise.

You bent above me, and your mighty hair,
Like dusk and sunset mixing, mixed with mine ;
I felt a kiss, or 'twas a passing air
That had been loitering on lips divine.
Then you drew back, and with a crimson look
Gazed at the pebbles in the talking brook.

THE KNIGHT OF POESY.

ANOTHER Minstrel, panting for a name,
 Enters the lists of Rhyme
 To run a tilt with Time,
 And bring, low kneeling at his feet, great Fame.

With vizard down, he comes as one in mask,
 Like some adventurer of old
 Who, till he won the Spurs of Gold,
 Laid not aside his hauberk or his casque ;
 He comes, his name and prowess all untold.
 Unknown, this Poet-knight,
 Mounted on Pegasus, most famous steed !
 Seeketh the Tournament of Poesy,
 Full of the hope of glorious deed ;

And dares in deadly fight—
 Invoking first his patron Muse—
 All knights that speak maliciously ;
 All that discourteously refuse
 To press their goblet's mouth of wine,
 When he shall give as toast divine,
 His Ladye-love, the loveliest of the Nine—
 Dark-veiled Melpomene !

For Beauty—be it in
 A blue-bell's or a woman's eyes,
 A rose's or a maiden's lips in bloom,
 A forest, waving like a helmet plume,
 Or the soft tintings of the sunset skies—
 He has a soul that claims the chance
 To blunt a sword or to break a lance.

Beauty's champion, he is Virtue's too ;
 For are not grace and goodness sisters twin ?
 Virtue is a beauty that within
 Sheds radiance without, as does a light
 Through the windows of a room at night,
 Or flowers, breathing from a vase,
 Or jewels from their case.

He loves all forms of loveliness,

And Nature sits within him like a heart,
Ruling with magic tenderness.

The air-winged birds that dart
Up the blue stair-case of the porphyry clouds ;
The Autumn-fingered foliage that shrouds
A sleeping church-yard, or the evening dim,
Stalking majestically down
Upon the noisy and mast-fringed town,
Or the winged and ever restless ships,
Or the murmuring of Ocean's lips,
Are everlasting joys to him ;
For he is one whose bosom doubted never
“ A thing of beauty ” is “ a joy forever.”

His war-cry shall be heard ;
It is that mystic word
Which, on a banner in the twilight brown,
A youth once carried thro' an Alpine town—
Excelsior !

A CHRISTMAS CHIME.

THE GUESTS,

AND WHAT THE STRANGE OLD MAN DOES IN
THE OLD HOUSE EVERY CHRISTMAS NIGHT.

"All houses wherein men have lived and died,
Are haunted houses."—LONGFELLOW.

THE angels bend in heaven's arch to-night,
And sprinkle snow-flakes on the city's
streets ;
The wind moans round the chimney-tops in
fright
And sprightly hail taps every one it meets.

The lamps that stud the white and pearlèd way,
 Glare like mad demons thro' the blinding
 storm ;
 Shop-windows watch the snow sprites as they
 play,
 Or throw their rays upon each passing form.

'Tis Christmas night ; and while from street to
 street,
 The echo hurries, like a startled mouse,
 And phantom laughs are mingling with the
 sleet,
 An Old Man sits within an olden house.

The house is quaint, odd-fashioned, and antique ;
 Grim Time has passed his palm across the
 roof
 And left it wrinkled ! 'Tis so dark and bleak
 At twilight play the children keep aloof.

There's not a sound in all its sombre halls,
 And brooding silence sits upon the stair ;
 One can most see the " quiet as it crawls"
 Along the entry through the biting air.

Why sits the Old Man in the big old room,
 Watching the hearth-light o'er the mouldings
 climb ?

The man and chamber in its ghostly gloom
 Seem things forgotten in the flight of time.

Why sits he thus beside the wide-mouthed
 hearth ?

Does he call up sweet forms that, like the
 leaves,

Have mixed with flowers in the wombed earth ?
 Or does he hear the hail upon the eaves ?

The jingling sleigh-bells in the street below,
 The goblin sleet that droppeth down the
 flue,

The huntsman wind that whistles to the snow—
 Are these the noises that he listens to ?

Or does he catch the echoes of the Past,
 Like fine vibrations of a distant bell ?
 Do memories fall on him thick and fast
 As hail without upon the snowy swell ?

I wot not either ; but the Old Man seems
 A link between this mortal life and death—
 A dreamy pilgrim to the Land of Dreams,
 His life, a feather balanced on a breath.

He bends his head ; he hears the panels creak ;
 Then by the chimney leaves his cushioned
 chair ;
 And, with a joy his moistened eyelids speak,
 He draws three seats beside his own with
 care.

He holds his old hands out, as if to grasp
 Some other hands ; he sighs and smiles and
 sighs ;
 Now stands as if within some loving clasp—
 His eyes intently gaze in other eyes !

And now he points his phantom guests their
 seats.
 He heaps fresh fuel upon the fire-place ;
 And all is still, save one quick heart that beats
 In yonder clock, within its coffin case.

O, what a queer Old Man ! And does he see
 Ethereal spirits seated in those chairs ?
 Do souls come back from God's eternity
 To mingle with us and our daily cares ?

I do believe it ! and 'tis grand to feel
 That, when the breezes lift our fevered hair,
 Some friend's hand does it, and at ev'ry meal
 The loved are near us, round us like the air !

I do believe they're with us all the day,
 And o'er our holier hours vigils keep ;
 That they kneel with us when we kneel to pray,
 And bend above us when we fall asleep.

But see, he smiles ! O sure some airy one
 Has twined a sunbeam round his parted lips ;
 He hears a voice, a voice for him alone—
We hear it not, nor see the ghost that trips

Around the arm-chair of the dreamy man.
 A lip intangible his own lip nears ;
 It falls so kindly on his thin cheek wan,
 The Old Man weeps, and slumbers in his tears.

And every year when holy Christmas comes,
He draws those chairs within the hearth-stone
gleams,
And fondly all his viewless household sums,
Then falls asleep 'mid kisses, tears, and
dreams.

E U D E L E .

THE soft wind moved the curtain's fold,
 And rippled her gold waves of hair,
 While like some voiceless lily's lip,
 Touched by a gentle whiff of air,
 Moved as by inward melody,
 Her lips were trembling with a prayer,
 Which lark-like soared from out this world of
 sin.

“To-morrow,” and she raised her eyes,
 “I'll walk with Christ in Paradise.”
 And thro' the window came the Twilight in.

The soft wind moved the curtain's fold,
 And cooled her cheek with kisses faint;
 And as she lay upon the bed,
 The curls that clustered o'er her head
 Were like the halo of a saint.

A light was breaking on her lips,
 Like that which tinges mountain tips
 At death of August days ;
 While with her on the pillow lay
 The golden parasites of day—
 The sunset's amber rays.
 The flowers closed their eyelids up ;
 The harebell and the butter-cup,
 The tulip and the sun-struck jessamine.
 With whispered sighs and dainty feet,
 The evening zephyrs tripped about ;
 Then, as a flower yields its sweet,
 A pure spirit flitted out,
 And thro' the window came the Twilight in.

We hid her in a green retreat,
 With daisies at her heart and feet,
 To guard her with sweet eyes ;
 And when we weep Eudele as dead,
 We smile to think of what she said
 Of " Christ " and " Paradise "—
 Of that far sphere where neither sin
 Nor sombre Twilight enter in.

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP.

A RAINY DAY LYRIC.

ALL through that dreariest day;
 Out of the window pane
 We gazed, but our eyes could see
 The rain,—nothing but rain.

Drip, drip, drip,
 It said to the sullen eaves;
 Drip, drip, drip,
 And danced upon the leaves.

The flowers that clomb the porch,
 Violets like the skies,
 Grew as dreamy and dim as
 A tearful maiden's eyes.

Drip, drip, drip,
 It said to the sullen eaves;
 Drip, drip, drip,
 And trembled on the leaves.

A thrill, like a thrill of joy,
 Ran through the fields of grain ;
 And they bowed their heads beneath
 The blessing of the rain !

Drip, drip, drip,
 It said to the sullen eaves ;
 Drip, drip, drip,
 And danced upon the leaves.

The barn grew solemn and brown,
 The white-washed fence and wall ;
 And the " poplars " at the gate
 Looked odd, and grim, and tall.

Drip, drip, drip,
 It said to the sullen eaves ;
 Drip, drip, drip,
 And trembled on the leaves.

When seated around the hearth—
 The evening meal was through—
 We could hear the cunning rain
 Come singing down the flue.

Drip, drip, drip,
 It said to the sullen eaves ;
 Drip, drip, drip,
 And danced upon the leaves.

And when we went to our beds,
Still we could hear the rain ;
It tried the kitchen door, and
Spit on the window pane !

Drip, drip, drip,
It said to the sullen eaves ;
Drip, drip, drip,
And trembled on the leaves.

Still does it haunt our dreams, that
Weariest, dreary rain,
That came from the mouths of clouds,
To bless the golden grain !

Drip, drip, drip,
It says to the sullen eaves ;
Drip, drip, drip,
And trembles on the leaves.

TOUSOULIA.

A LEGEND OF THE MOHEGAN.

THE Juniata rippled at her feet,
And like a fallen giant lay the sun
Aslant the silent trees. Tousoulia
Was sad. The maiden had been waiting
through
Three crescent moons; had marked them orb
and go,
Like dreamy Houris, down the stairs of night
To bathe in mists behind the purple hills;
And yet her Indian warrior came
Not back.

Thus to the stream that wandered by,
Thus to the shadows of the coming night
Tousoulia made her moan:

“ The autumn has been breathing on the leaves,
And burnt them into redness with her lips ;
And I am sadder than the Whip-po-will.

“ The summer birds have floated to the south ;
My lonely heart is vacant as their nests—
It shall be empty till my Chief comes home !

“ There are no footfalls that can make me glad,
There are no warblings of the lover’s lute,
At eventide, outside the wigwam door.

“ No tender hands caress me as they used ;
Only the lips of moonbeams kiss my breast ;
And I am sadder than the Whip-po-will.

“ When wilt thou come ? and is the trail so
 long,
Three moons must stalk between thee and thy
 bride ?
She waits for thee as eagerly, Lenape,

“ As Earth for Spring to kiss it into buds !
The Bending Lily yearns for him who will
Made her as happy as a humming bird !”

And softly with her foot she stirred
 A clump of water-lilies, and then grew as
 mute
 As moulting robins.

Like a lark that skims
 The outer surface of cerulean
 Clouds, shot a canoe from out the shadow
 Of the trailing trees; and, like a blood-hound
 On its mistress' knee, it placed its long head
 On the beach. Another and another,
 And a third; while from them leaped a score of
 Painted braves.

So softly came they, the Mohegan girl
 Perceived them not till some dry branches
 cracked
 Beneath their feet; then, springing up, she
 threw
 Her arms around the neck of one who stalked
 Majestically as a king—'twas not
 Lenape. All rich with blushes she drew
 back
 And, at a distance, followed them into
 The Indian village.

The Council fire

Leaped high that night ; a scalping party that
Had been three moons away, came opulent
In deeds and trophies back. And there were
Praises and welcomings for the returned,
Wailings and wild sorrowing for the dead.

The hungry fire was fed with brushwood ; high
Into the night its flaming arms were stretched
Like one in prayer, Without the reaches of
Its radiancy stood Tousoulia,
With heart as full of tears as a cloud in
April time.

Each warrior told his

Own exploits with a wild eloquence ; then
As the calm of stagnant winds before the
Lightning, with its fiery finger, pricks
The swollen cloud, and deluges the earth
With most delicious tears, a silence fell
Upon the plumed and dusky throng. Then,
like
The moanings of a distant ocean, broke
Upon a hundred swarthy lips the name
Of all names that Tousoulia loved.

War Eagle rose ; the hair had fallen from
His aged head as leaves from the grand oak
In autumn winds. With a big heart he spoke :

“ When the Great Father scalps the forest trees,
And we have laid our store of bear-meat in,
Our young men must take panther skins and
corn
To Nemhaw's wigwam, for he hath no son !”

The speaker paused, and thro' the stillness
trilled
A laugh so fearful that the couchant braves
Sprang to their feet; the sleepy watch curs
howled,
And frightened squaws drew nearer to the fire.
Tousoulia pressing through the wildered
Throng, stood by the crackling fire scornfully.

“ The great Mohegan is not dead !” she cried.
“ I hear the paddles of his bark canoe
Afar, afar !” she paused like one that hears
A sound i' the distance. “ He will come. I'll
wait
For him. He pants beneath the weight of
scalps !
The great Mohegan is not dead !”

Alas ! in the too sudden shock of wo, her brain
 Had lost its equipoise, and her mind went
 Wandering, like a bird whose nest has been
 Destroyed.

Through weary length of autumn
 Days, she sat beside the Juniata
 Trailing her feet, the live long day, among
 The globes of water-lilies, and 'twas thus
 She made her moan unto the listening wood,
 And to the mouthing wind, and to the stream
 Whose voice was like the music of her own :

“When wilt thou come? and is the trail so long,
 Three moons must stalk between thee and thy
 bride,
 Whose heart is empty as a last year's nest ?”

And to this day the spot is pointed out
 Where sat the maniac girl, and saw three
 Summers drop in leafy graves, waiting for
 Him who never, never came to make her
 “Happy as a humming bird.”

A MADRIGAL.

'MONG Nellie's curls I saw a rose to-night,
And I was vexed that I was not a rose,
A captive chained with ebon chains like those,
Silken and soft, and beautifully bright.

And then I wished myself the diamond speck
That glittered on the berther of her dress,
To tremble on the brink of loveliness,
To kiss the tempting whiteness of her neck.

And when I saw that saucy little foot
Peeping from 'neath her skirts with Sylph-like
grace,
She must have read the wish upon my face,
The silly wish that I'd been born a *boot*!

I MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

"I MIGHT have been" 's a weary lay
 Too often sang, and foolishly.
 With deeper care on heart and brain,
 More sorrowful and full of pain
 You might have been,
 You might have been—
 Thank God for what you are !

You might have won a poet's crown,
 And swayed the Janus-faced town,
 Wringing applauses from all men ;
 But *purser* you might not have been,
 Might not have been ;
 Truer, you might not have been—
 Thank God for what you are !

The gentle hand that clasps your own,
 The lips that sway you with a tone,
 Death might have chilled. Go not alone,
 Like the complaining rain, and moan

“ I might have been,
 I might have been,”—
 Thank God for what you are !

I have a prayer ; 'tis not to crave
 Exemption from a nameless grave,
 Nor fame to stamp me with its seal ;
 'Tis that I may, when o'er me steal

The thoughts of what I might have been,
 The thoughts of what I might have been,
 Thank God for what I am.

* * * *

I.

As falls a ray of transient golden light
 Through half-shut blinds upon the darkened
 floor,
 And leaving, turns the twilight into night,
 Making the shadows deeper than before :

II.

So through the darkened windows of my heart
 Stole the warm, transient sunshine of thy love,
 Then left me darkness. O ! thy cruel art
 Hath made me colder than a marble Jove.

III.

Think how cold ! when I can meet thy glances
 Nor feel the blood pulp warmer in my veins ;
 Time, Iconoclast ! hath broke my fancies !
 Memory, still a captive, is in chains.

IV.

* * * * I know the ever restless thought
 That reigns within thee ; that thy dark eyes
 wear
 A calm that happiness has never brought—
 A Resignation, sister to Despair.

V.

Not do I view thee as the passing throng ;
 The surface pleases them : they do not probe ;
 I see thy woes in wit, and laugh, and song,
 Like rotting monarchs in their ermine robe.

VI.

We are not married, and yet not unwed ;
 Unwed in joy, in sorrow we are one ;
 Though far apart, together we will tread
 A path thro' life the twilight falls upon.

VII.

The twilight's on our faces, and our lives
 Are but the echoes of one saddened tune.
 Joy sank ; grief rose, all passions *that* survives—
 The night outlives its little silver moon.

THE TWO CITIES.

There are two worlds about us,
Two worlds in which we dwell—
Within us and without us.—*R. H. Stoddard.*

'Twas dusk, and from my window
Upon the street below
I saw the people passing,
Like shadows, to and fro ;

And faintly, very faintly
I heard the ceasing din ;
And like the dusk without me
There was a dusk within.

And thoughts with eager footsteps,
Dim thoughts of joy and pain,
Filled the streets and by-ways of
The city in my brain.

A passing light and holy
 Like that which softly falls
 Through open gates in cloudlets
 Upon cathedral walls,

Fell upon the towers of
 The city in my mind ;
 My inward sight grew clearer
 My outward vision blind.

Forgotten was the window ;
 There seemed no street below,
 I did not see them passing,
 The shadows, to and fro.

I was between Two Cities
 In which my spirit dwells ;
 And I could hear the chimings
 Of two sad sets of bells

Without the holy Trinity's ;
 And deep within my soul,
 My heart was throbbing like a bell
 When it has ceased to toll !

THE NIGHT WIND.

I FEEL like weeping when the dismal Wind
 Talks to the chimney of an Autumn night—
 So strangely talks with meaning undefined—
 Or scolds the forest till it shrinks in fright,
 And with its lips of leaves, all terror white,
 Begs of the breeze to treat it less unkind.

To-night, before the supper lamps were lit,
 The poor wind whistled such a doleful tune
 My eyelids swelled like rain-fed clouds in June;
 I drew my arm-chair near the hearth, to sit
 And form the embers into figures quaint;
 I fancied Vikings, bridges, castles drear;
 But ah! that Wind, now growing loud, now
 faint,
 Hung like a guilty conscience on my ear.

IMORE.

A LEGEND OF THE MINSTREL TIMES.

ONE day while sitting in the dim old woods,
 Charmed with the braided notes of brooks and
 birds,

Sleep stole upon him like a pleasant thought.

His head was pillowed upon violets,

And lilies stood on tip-toe to his lips.

As thus he slept, an angel dropped among

The flowerets, the Lady Volant and

The Earl went by and saw him slumbering ;

And ever after in the maiden's dream,

Was Imore sleeping by the rivulet.

Ah, he beheld her on that summer day
 Through the sly openings of his roguish eyes ;

And she was queenly as a budded moon !
 Peerless as she whose nectared kisses cost
 Mark Antony a kingdom ! And he turned
 From gay to sad, and haunted the old wood ;
 His cheeks grew pale as lilies in a rill ;
 He sang no longer like a morning lark,
 But hummed around the lindens like a bee.

Once Lady Volant loved to sit and watch
 From Odenwald's high tower, the red sun
 Folding his purple pinions for the eve,
 And the clear stars that cluster thick upon
 The arch of night, like watery diamonds
 On a ring of jet. But now she strayed far
 In the leafy glens, and plucking roses,
 Warm with the parting kiss that sunset gives,
 Came melancholy with the twilight home.

One eve as she was roving thro' the glade,
 She found the minstrel sleeping as before
 Upon a couch of violets—as once
 Diana found Endymion asleep,
 Loving him ever after—and from out
 His parted lips his breath came like the breath
 Of hyacinths. Then whispered Volant
 Softly to herself, “ Methinks I could such

Honied sweetness from those full lips draw, as
 Does a bee from the sweet honeysuckle.
 Now by the blood that circles in these veins
 And prompts me in this most delicious freak !
 I'll taste them, and if he awakes I'll swear
 That 'twas some spirit kissed him in his dream,
 Not I ; that I'm the daughter of an earl
 And would not stoop to press a common lip :
 Then I'll sweep by, majestic as the Night."

Then, like a rain-bow, she bent over him,
 With all the hues of autumn on her cheeks.
 Raising the fringed curtains of his eyes,
 He threw both arms around her snowy neck
 And punished her with kisses ! She drew back
 With angered orbs ; then blushed, then thro'
 the wood
 Leaped the silvery echoes of her laugh.
 And then she called him " cruel, cruel boy,"
 And asked him if the blue-bells did not close
 Their eyes with envy, when he looked at them ;
 And then she laid her hand among his curls.
 The evening melted, and night found them
 there—
 Cupid and Psyche wooing in a wood !

“ There is a clime,” he said, “ a far off land
 Of orange-bowers and magnolia trees,
 With streams of gold fish gurgling ’mong the
 hills ;

Where winter never throws a pall upon
 The sweet-lipped flowerets, and May and June
 Go, hand in hand, throughout the live-long
 year !”

Softly at night she left the castle gate
 To wander with the minstrel to that land
 Of never dying summer and blue skies.
 They wandered off, and never more were seen
 By any swine-herd of those dewy dells,
 Nor by the Dryads, nor the Fauns, nor Fays,
 Nor any of the sylvan train that dwell
 By the cool fountains of that haunted wood.

FOREVER AND FOREVER.

AN IMITATION.

SWEET Nea held her hand in mine,
 Beside us rolled the river ;
 " Wilt love me Nea ? " and she said
 " Forever and forever . "

And when the roses blushed again
 I stood beside that river ,
 But Nea, darling ! she was gone
 Forever and forever .

She went with blossoms in the spring,
 And shall I see her never ?
 Ah, yes ! for those who love, love on
 Forever and forever .

"There is another better world,"

Where pain and death are never ;
There she and I shall live and love
Forever and forever.

A NEST OF SONNETS.

I.

THE LITTLE WITCHES AT THE
CROSSINGS.

THESE imps of Want ! these sprites of Poverty !
 That flock the crossways of the muddy town
 With brooms at ev'ry rain, whence come they,
 pray ?
 Spring they from earth, or do they tumble
 down,
 Like animalculæ, in drops of rain ?
 How phantom-like they move about the street !
 Are they dwarf Gnomes fresh from some cavern's
 brain,
 Like those in Arab legends ? Can hearts beat
 In such odd creatures ? Are they more than
 breath ?

Look at those skinny out-stretched hands !

Why they

Are spectral as the Witches in Macbeth !

Drop them a coin, pedestrian, thus may

You win their good will, which were best to
own,

Since heaven can tell what elfs these are alone.

II.

PHŒBUS.

DEW-DAPPLED Phœbus, with half-shaded eye,
Stalks through the portals of the eastern skies ;
The stars that drop above the world on high,
Beneath his gaze close their cloud-lidded eyes ;
He taps the dreaming city till it wakes
And hums and murmurs like an o'er turned hive ;
With twit'ring birds the forest is alive,
• And bends to see its shadow in the lakes !
In toying wavelets the soft zephyr breaks,
Bearing the perfume from the gummy pines ;
Flowers, the drinking-cups of the god-sun,
Are brimmed with dew. His touch incarnadines
The dank hill tops, and all it falls upon—
The reeling grain-fields and the streams that
run.

III.

THE NIGHT RAIN.

PITEOUS Rain ! O how it sobs without !
Driven from Heaven like a sinning child,
Thrust from the Gates by scolding winds and
 wild,
It wanders weary, drearily about.
At me it peereth through the window panes,
And almost asks if I would let it in—
I'm not proclivous, weeping child of sin.
Then off it speeds and curses and complains ;
Its footfalls sound with quick and nervous beat
On dismal miles of dimly-lighted street.
It pauses oft, as if its tim'rous ear
Had caught a sound — 'twas only sighing
 leaves—
Then rushes onward with a trembling fear,
And seeks to hide beneath protruding eaves.

IV.

“THANATOPSIS.”

WHEN one can die with the proud consciousness
That he will 'bide forever with the world,
And that when monarchs and their broods are
hurled

Contemtuously down Oblivion's abyss,
He will span time like heaven's bow ; God !
this

Must set his blood to boiling, and with bliss
Fill his king-heart up to the very brim !
Yet I do know of a sublimer joy
Possessing which I would not envy him—
O faith ! the alchemist that turns th' alloy
Of death to golden calm. 'Tis when the soul,
Uncaged, goes singing lark-like thro' the spheres
Confidingly to God, devoid of fears,
Having on earth paid Paradise its toll !

v.

N O O N .

HE's chosen the broad zenith for his seat ;
 His brow is sweaty, and his sultry breath
 Fills the sick town, and in the crowded street
 Men and o'er-laden horses sink in death ;
 In rocky, dewless pastures, close beneath
 The arms of trees the drowsy cattle meet ;
 The grain grows dry within its heated sheath ;
 Wild lilacs droop upon the sunny steep,
 And winds in knolls have stol'n away to sleep.
 A sense of something heavy spheres the air—
 As if the earth lay in a horrid trance,
 While through the still blue heaven with a
 stare
 The Noon-king looketh, scorching with his
 glance,
 Proud as a lion glaring from his lair.

VI.

TO ———

ON HIS BEING UNJUSTLY CRITICISED.

'Tis ever so, my friend; when one would climb
 The rounds of his ambition up to fame,
 And write, in blotless characters, his name
 Upon the unrolled manuscript of Time,
 There are some men who, as he 'tempts to rise,
 Will envy him the wreath their fate denies,
 And seek to wound him with their shafts of
 scorn.

There 're many such that mark thee on thy
 way.

Teach them this lesson, friend: He that is
 born

For greatness *will* be great! and enmity
 Cannot *unmake* a Poet.—Did the thorn
 That cut the brow of Jesus make him less?

* * * * *

ELEGIAC.

HE never wed with thoughts of death
Worm-eaten hearts and nighty pall,
Nor mystery, like the writings of
The fire-light's finger on the wall :

'Twas but to sink in fibered earth ;
To go where buds and blossoms go
In winter time, to rest ; then bloom
Through summers of eternal flow.

He wrestled nobly with his fate,
And strove to mask his soul's distress ;
He passed, a spectre, through the gate
Of death alone and shadowless.

He was to me most like a stream
Which, in some darkened vein of earth
Flows thro' its rocky bowels, but
To daylight never bubbles forth.

BERTHABELL.

WHERE an ivy vine is creeping,
 And tears of dew-drops weeping,
 They tell me thou art sleeping,
 Berthabell !

I have often sat alone
 And read on the dark gray stone,
 With green mosses over-grown,
 " Berthabell."

I *know* we laid thee there,
 With thy forehead cold and fair !
 But now thou art elsewhere,
 Berthabell !

Thy soul stole forth in flowers,
 That fainted 'neath the showers
 On thy grave, in April hours,
 Berthabell !

O ! I nevermore will come
 And be weeping at this tomb ;
 It is all too full of gloom,
 Berthabell !

I will rather seek the glade
 Where the willows throw their shade,
 Where our shattered vows were made,
 Berthabell !

I will watch the willow swing,
 I will hear the streamlet sing,
 And kind memory will bring
 Berthabell !

ABOUT A TINY GIRL.

IDA, look me in the eyes!
Place your tiny lips on mine,
Rest one arm upon my brow,
Round my neck the other twine.

Did you leave your house of blocks
And the toy that pleases thee?
Did you see me sad and wan
That you clomb upon my knee,
Kissing me so tenderly?

Did your finer sense perceive
Something of unhappiness?
Did your inner vision see
What the others did not guess,
That you clomb upon my knee,
Kissing with such tenderness?

"Ida loves you very much,"
 Don't I know it, dainty one?
 There is not a single curl,
 Tiny curls, like beams of sun!
 Reeling from that busy head,
 Floating as a golden charm,
 That I would not give my hand,
 Or my life to save from harm.

Ida, look me in the eyes!
 Place your tiny lips on mine,
 Rest one arm upon my brow,
 Round my neck the other twine.

THE GENTLE HAND.

WHERE trips the blue Piscataqua along in maiden
 glee,
 And throws herself upon the breast of her old
 lover—Sea,
 I stood one August sunset with a gentle hand
 in mine,—
 The sunbeams pouring in the deep like streams
 of yellow wine.

Upon our right the old Fort stood, forbidding
 as a frown,
 And half within its shadow lay the little dingy
 town ;
 And here and there along the shore the fishing-
 smacks were hauled,
 While boats, like lazy turtles, up and down the
 river crawled !

The Lighthouse with its eye of fire looked o'er
 the breakers swell,
 Standing all calm and solemn, like some watch-
 ful sentinel ;
 And o'er the undulating lands our stretching
 eyes would mark
 Old Portsmouth's spires tapering up half-way
 to meet the dark.

Low at our feet the ocean broke in long and
 frothy rolls,
 And like a gem upon its breast we saw the Isle
 of Shoals!
 O! dear to me the Fort, the town, the dimpled
 ocean's moan,
 But dearer was the gentle hand I held within
 my own !

Like a lion that is wounded, but in scorn dis-
 dains to groan,
 Creeps to some secretest cavern there to bleed
 and die alone,
 The sun in sullen majesty was creeping to his
 lair,
 His jagged sides a-panting and his red eye-balls
 a-glare.

The lovely moon, like Cypris, rose from out the
 jeweled sea,
 And laid her lily hand upon the Light-house on
 the lee ;
 And touched the rocky bastion and the ram-
 parts of the Fort,
 And ran along the sleepy guns that gaped from
 ev'ry port.

It was a moon that might have lured the Mer-
 maids from their caves,
 From out the glaucous grottoes of their realms
 beneath the waves,
 To sit upon the sloping strand and comb from
 out their hair
 The sea-weed, and to have a chat with loving
 Mermen there.
 O ! dear to me the Fort and town asleep in light
 divine ;
 But dearer than the landscape was the hand I
 held in mine !

In brilliant, starry necklaces and bridal sheen
 arrayed,
 The Moon stood out in heaven like a pale un-
 willing maid ;

She loved the dewy Morning with his yellow
curls of light ;

She's doomed to wed another and to be the
bride of Night.

I whispered this to Lillie as she turned her eyes
above ;

“ 'Tis sad,” she said, “ 'tis very sad to wed not
where we love.”

The hand I pressed too ardently was drawn
away from mine,

And eyes were turned toward me all bewitch-
ingly divine ;

I dared to take that hand again and soothe it in
my own ;

I dared to steal my arm around a half reluctant
zone ;

I told her how the waters kissed the islands in
their sport,

And —— we neither saw the Lighthouse, the
islands, nor the Fort !

THE THREE CONCEITS.

(PRELUDE AFTER TENNYSON.)

IT happened on a summer day that Hall
 And Walter Everland, a young poet,
 And Arthur Thornburn and my humble self,
 Were in a church-yard near th' Academy,
 Reading odd epitaphs. And tired out,
 We stretched ourselves beneath the wedded
 boughs,
 Of some tall lindens by the river side,
 Cheating the laggard moments of their prey
 Of weariness in drawing similes
 From clouds, and trees, and rocks. Each one
 in turn,
 Putting some question to the other three.
 Thus when to me the lot of querist fell :

“What is this grave-yard like?” Then Hall replied,

“’Tis like a bee-hive with the bees
Dead in their cells!” And we grew solemn as
The shadows of the linden trees.

“What is this grave-yard like?” And Arthur said,

Resting his eyes upon the tombs,
“These bodies, lacking souls and tenantless,
Are like so many empty rooms!”

“What is this grave-yard like?” And Walter said,

“A flower garden where are sown
By Christ the seeds of many flowerets,
To blossom Resurrection Morn!”

And then we smiled, and placed upon his head
With loving hands a daisy wreath.
Who looks in the mild eyes of *Faith*, can draw
Sweet fancies from the realm of Death.

The twilight coming on us, we arose;
They to their studies went, I to my room

To think of those three quaint conceits, but most
 Of Walter's; and I dropt asleep with his
 Sweet fancy folded in my heart, and have
 Felt nearer God and Heaven ever since.

EPIGRAMMATICAL.

SIR Criticus just made a caustic hit,
 Though Criticus has not a whit of wit.
 "These are my 'Bells,'" said I. The critic took
 The volume with a condescending look,
 And ran his fingers o'er it here and there,
 As school-boys o'er a rainbow colored map;
 "The Bells," quoth he; then grappling with a
 thought,
 "Now, by the gods! Sir, you should have a
 'cap'
 You may believe, Sir, what your critic tells,
 You long have merited 'a cap and bells!'"

TO SUE.

WRITTEN ONE RAINY NIGHT.

"The Past is with me, and I scarcely hear
Outside the weeping of the homeless rain."

THE cottage and the mill, Sue, that crazy talk-
ing mill

Whose hand caresses carelessly the wanton,
romping rill!

The olden bridge above, and the music flow
beneath;

The eddies, and the stars that came to join the
water-wreath;

The trains from distant towns, Sue, whose
shriekings startle night;

That looming factory hard by with window eyes
of light;

The grave-yard near the Oaks, Sue, the breezes
 and their sighs ;
 The clouds that read the epitaphs with their
 dilating eyes !

The ruined Fort that stands, Sue, and frowns
 so in the night,
 Where meets Piscataqua and toys with Ocean's
 lips of white ;
 The moon-light walks we've had and the walks
 without a moon,
 Thro' woods stuck full of rosy eyes by airy-
 ankled June !

The gleaming of your eyes, Sue, the floating
 of your hair,
 The echoes of your lips that trill and faint
 upon the air,
 They all come back to-night, Sue, they all come
 back to-night ;
 My eyes behold the dusty Past and Memory
 holds the light.

The unforgiving winds, Sue, torment the tender
 rain ;
 A storm's without, I heed it not—I'm with you
 once again !

ANACREONTIC.

I.

THE gleam that lies
 In Fannie's eyes,
 And vainly tries to hide its glow,
 Has scarce to me
 More witchery
 Than that within my chalice now.
 The bubbles rise and wink like eyes,
 Like woman's eyes divinely glow !

II.

Come let me press thy ruby lips,
 My Goblet ! lips of wine !
 Glide through my soul and flood my brain
 With images diviné !

Who would not kiss
 A lip like this
 Since every kiss a care dispels ?
 Each sweeter far
 Than dew-drops are,
 Or honey in the lily-bells.

III.

Mythology ! By heaven there is
 No heathen god but one !
 My vine-browed Bacchus, purple-mouthed !
 Astride his royal tun !
 I am to-night
 His proselyte,
 And wrong or right I'll crown him king ;
 And I will quaff
 A song, a laugh
 From each fresh bowl our Hebes bring.

IV.

When dark-eyed Grief would fill my eyes
 With tears unto the brim,
 The Lethe of my woe I find
 Beneath this goblet's rim.

O! who would wear
 A brow of care
 When we can share a cup like this?
 What eye should grow
 Down-cast with woe
 When wine can pack a heart with bliss?

v.

Fate knows when we may meet again,
 My merrie friends and true;
 Then let's dissolve our souls in Hock,
 As clouds dissolve in dew.
 Come, let us press those ruby lips,
 Our goblet's lips of wine!
 And flood our souls and throng our brains
 With images divine!
 Who would not kiss
 A lip like this
 Since every kiss a care dispels?
 Each sweeter far
 Than dew-drops are
 Or honey in the lily-bells!

WITH THE STARS AND THE STRIPES AROUND HIM.

"We found him as he had fallen from his horse, his sword still firmly grasped in his hand, and the flag he had died defending, drawn across his breast. He looked as though he had gone to sleep, expecting every moment to be roused by a call to arms. There was not a clear eye among us, when one of his friends severed two ringlets from the many that clustered on his forehead, to "send home" to his mother and betrothed. He was buried as he was found—the flag, the sword, the soldier, in one grave!"
—*Letters from the Rio Grande.*

LET him lie i' the dark narrow grave you have
made,

Let him lie, as when dead, you found him;
Let him sleep with his hand on the dented blade,
And the stars and the stripes around him!

But first cut a lock from his long chestnut hair

For one that the hero left weeping;
And another "send home," and with them tell
where

The son and the lover are sleeping.

When long winter nights, at the home of his
birth,

Are shortened with legend and story,
Some voice in the household will tell of his
worth,

And speak of his death and his glory ;
And fancy will picture the place where he
sleeps,

Beside him the blue winding river,
The long sloping flats where the chaparral
sweeps,

And Summer breathes softly forever.

The mother will weep as she thinks of "her
boy,"

The ties that so tenderly bound him ;
But the lad at her side will think 'twere a joy
To sleep with a banner around him !

And she, the dark-eyed and the beautiful one,
Who waited so long for her lover,
Will fall asleep tearful, and dream until morn
Of the joys and the love-meetings over.

When another shall kneel at the feet of the fair
To win her with sighs and with vowing,
She'll tell him her heart, as he pleading kneels
there,
Is tombed where a river is flowing.

The ringlet you cut from the pale marble brow
 Of our comrade, warrior-hearted,
 She'll press to her lips, and remember her vow
 Of faith to the dear one departed.

Lead the war-horse back to the cool hazel-hurst
 Where the mild Merrimack is roving ;
 When his eye grows dim he'll be tenderly nurst
 By those that will never cease loving.
 Lead the war-horse back ! There's a horrible
 stain

On the saddle seat, ah, and gory !
 'Tis the heart's blood of one for his Country
 slain—

Death, death is the price of all glory !

Let him sleep by the wave of the Rio Grande
 With no proud sculptured urn above him,
 There are tablets enough in his own dear land,
 The sorrowing, sad hearts that love him.
 Let him lie i' the dark narrow grave you have
 made,

Let him lie as when dead, you found him,
 Let him sleep with his hand on the dinted blade
 And the stars and the stripes around him !

THE LACHRYMOSE.

"Beauty still walketh on the earth and air,
 Our present sunsets are as rich in gold
 As ere the Iliad's music was out-rolled."

THIS World's as beautiful to-day as when
 It dropped fresh from the fingers of a God!
 The Philomel makes heavenly the night,
 And Roses bring a blush to earth's great cheeks
 Each summer time. The sun has not grown dim.
 The same wild breezes sweep our Southern vales,
 And wake rough music on th' Atlantic's wave
 That brushed the dew-drop from the crocus leaf
 In Eden's solitude. I cannot see
 That earth is tired out, and wrinkled like
 An aged face; that it has fallen in
 The "sere and yellow leaf." I think that it
 Is vastly young, and destined yet to swing
 Some thirty thousand centuries in air!

Perdition catch these lachrymosic bards
 That moan forever about weary earth
 And sea! as if their dismal dactyles could
 Improve it much. There is one poet who
 Has risen up like a great rocket with
 A burst of stars, *he's* going to "tinker" it!
 Kind heaven help him! 'twere a pretty job!
 For my own part I am content if I
 Can tinker joy, making it water-proof
 To keep out Tears! As to all theories
 And schism and the like, I do bequeath
 Them unto learned heads. A Poet can
 Do much by writing purely, but far more
 By living as he writes. Who would reform
 The world, let him reform himself, teaching
 By example more than precept.

Now I,

Who am no Bard, but a mere poetling,
 A "ballad monger" stringing fancies on
 A thread of rhyme, a literary bee
 Humming round the world and drawing sweet-
 ness
 From it, I — a poet be it written
 Of the ephemeral sort, who, dying,
 Would be missed about as much as yonder
 Butterfly — do not think myself better

Than my neighbor, but I've faith enough to
Trust the unseen hands that toss the ocean
Up, those hands that garner whirlwinds i' the
air,
With tinkering this leaky world!

THE OLD HOUSE.*

THE Old House stands alone,
 A queer and crumbling pile,
 And though its shattered gables tell—
 Faintly, like the pulses of a bell—
 Of days and years, mayhap of centuries flown,
 I cannot help but smile.

The Old House stands alone,
 Over the windows and the oaken door,
 There's something in the mouldings that's so
 quaint;
 No knocker rings upon those pannels more;
 Some urchin wrung it off!
 In these degenerate days an urchin is no saint,
 But dares to laugh and scoff
 At things that bear the holy taint,
 And impress of the Past.

* The mansion of the late Hon. Theodore Atkinson, Court street, Portsmouth, N. H.

Its windows boast not one whole pane of glass ;
 And tho' it pains me, let it still be said
 That I have broken many a square, alas !
 My heart has since its reparation made.
 I'm grieving now I ever threw a stone ;
 They used to graze the damp discolored walls,
 And wake the sleeping echo in the halls
 And *that* would go from room to room and
 moan.

Besides, the windows always blushed so red,
 When Sunset stooped to catch the winged gulls,
 Or stripped him, shameless, for his ocean bed ;
 But now they seem like eyeless skulls
 Of some poor mortals dead !

That structure seems ideal !
 There's such an indistinctness in its form,
 I sometimes doubt if really it be real.
 So oft its roof hath felt the drenching storm,
 So oft it has been danced upon by hail,
 That *contour* seems washed out !
 And when I view it 'tis with half a doubt,
 As dimly through a veil.

That ancient House might tell a startling tale
 Could its cracked wainscots and dark closets
 speak ;

A tale to make the laughing lip turn pale
And send the heart's blood bubbling to the
cheek.

Ere I was born, when my grandsire was young,
A legend curious, rather wild withall,
Around that lonely mansion hung ;
And at some future time,
Should I possess the quantity of rhyme,
That legend shall be sung.

Those chambers drear, deserted save by storms,
Shall hear again the pleading Lover's sigh ;
I'll clutch the Past ! bring back its phantom
forms,

And light with passion many an orbless eye.
From disused graveyards of this dear old town,
I'll drag the helpless and long slumbering dead ;
With plumes I'll deck full many a fleshless head,
With clanking spurs full many a fleshless heel ;
Marshall the dead in some undying fight,
Robe them in silks as if for banquet night—
The flippant Fop, the Warrior in his steel !

* * * * *

O, let me tell thee one thing, trembling House !
That in thy days of former pomp gone by,

When light feet danced where crawls secure the
 mouse,
 And thy bare walls were hung with drapery—
 I tell thee truly—when thy haunted halls
 Were scenes of Bridal, Birth, and Revelry,
 And Funeral wails resounded in thy walls,
 None in those hours of pain and joy gone by
 Could love thee then more fondly now than I.

MY HIGHLAND MARY.

How sweetly comes the picture now !—
 The breathless wood, that August noon,
 When 'mong the panting leaves you sang
 “*Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon !*”
 The very streamlets, gurgling low,
 On happy ways did tarry,
 And whispering zephyrs ceased their sighs
 To hear my Highland Mary !

And when the evening touched the trees,
 And we turned homeward, you and I,
 I blush to own “a body” kissed
 “A body,” “*Coming thro' the Rye !*”
 The very streamlets, gurgling low,
 On happy ways did tarry,
 And whispering zephyrs ceased their sighs
 To hear my Highland Mary !

Was ever moon more milky white,
 Did ever stream have softer swells,
 Than when at Sagamore I heard
 The music of "*Those Evening Bells!*"
 Ah, memory calls each cadence back
 And trembles with a dim delight ;
 And Fancy listens till it hears
 The warblings of that "*Stilly Night!*"
 The very streamlets, gurgling low,
 On happy ways did tarry,
 And whispering zephyrs ceased their sighs
 To hear my Highland Mary !

TWILIGHT IDYL.

I.

How softly comes the Evening down
And weds the vapors of the town !
Bending o'er its tumult wild
As above her restless child
Bends the mother, singing lowly
Some refrain of melancholy.

II.

Voices heard at twilight hour
Have a deep, a touching power ;
Distant sounds seem clearer, nearer,
And the Dead are nearer, dearer !
Forms and faces seem to wear
Touches of diviner air.

III.

'Neath the glimpses of the moon,
 Flowers pale, and droop, and swoon,
 Truant streams steal out of glens,
 Over violet-scented fens,
 Through the tall grass of the meadow,
 Throwing back Diana's shadow.

IV.

The phantom fingers of the Breeze
 Play upon the slumberous trees
 Their wondrous, untaught minstrelsy !
 Making every leaf a key !
 Every twig a flat or sharp !
 Every sycamore a harp !

V.

The music voice of distant rills
 Humming in the hearts of hills
 Steals upon me like a stream
 Of music thro' a saddened dream,
 Or, as with a murmuring breath
 Thoughtful memory whispereth.

VI.

And, more charming than the chimes
Floating through a poet's rhymes,
From the hill-brows and the dells
Comes a tinkling tongue that tells
Of grazing herd, while from the hill
Pipes the plaintive Whip-po-will !

VII.

The Evening comes as softly down
Upon my heart as on the town ;
Bends above *its* tumult wild
As above her restless child
Bends the mother, singing lowly
Some refrain of melancholy.

THE GOLDEN ISLAND.

I.

I KNOW an Island sitting in the sea,
As stately as a God !
With great blue waves forever at its feet
Cringing like worshipers !
And when the crowned sun
Urges his hot steeds thro' the gates of day,
A golden shower falls on it the while.
Queen Cleopatra never bore
A brighter jewel on her bosom's swell
Than seems this Island sitting in the sea.

II.

And when the coy young Moon
Becomes enamored of her beauty in the wave,

As did Narcissos in the minstrel's rhyme—
 That sea-kist isle is flushed with silver light,
 And Beauty like a spirit haunteth it.
 O! it was grand of April nights to hear
 That strange old ocean talking to himself!
 Though Autumn blasts have filled them since,
 My ears still hold the silver strains
 Of those wind-ditties that all summer haunt
 That Golden Island sitting in the sea.

III.

I've but to close my eyes, and I behold
 Those curving wavelets in the cold moonlight,
 Tumbling above each other on the shore,
 Showing the stars their red phosphoric veins!
 O sprite of Thought! thy dainty fingers wipe
 The city's dust from out my blinded eyes.
 Like Him that called dead Lazarus from the
 tomb,
 Thou call'st "Come forth!" and lo!
 The buried Past lifts up its coffin lid,
 And stalketh forth with dust upon his brow!
 Twelve of the eighteen Summers of my life,
 Like Twelve white Maidens tending on a Queen,
 Stand, flower-decked, round Memory!
 O, thou fine sprite! what treasures thou hast
 piled

In the mind's store-house ! Memory unlocks
 The tomb of the departed Years, and shows
 Them in their royalty stretched out like Kings !
 O ! sweet the pictures that she brings to me—
 Dim woods with pulses of a scented wind,
 And twilight shadows hanging on the trees
 Like birdlings half asleep !
 And forms and faces that in soul-land move ;
 But dearer than the first of these,
 That Golden Island setting in the sea.

IV.

Æolus is a king there,
 And his rough-tuned lips
 Voice sea-born melodies for Neptune's ear !
 And Echo's hoyden daughters sit
 Upon the rocks, and mimic ocean,
 Who moans all the while, like an old man
 Whose years have led him to the gate of Death.
 The sea-gulls screech around it,
 And the lark above
 Hangs a sweet drop of music in the air !
 O ! 'tis a spot fit for a Deity,
 Grand as the isles of the Hesperides,
 That Golden Island sitting in the sea.

THE BARD.

QUAINT-thoughted Rumor whispered of a Name,
 And said that Fame had set another star
 Within the glorious galaxy that brows
 Old England's forehead! and that she had
 paused,

And had been listening to a Titan bard
 Attentively as Summer to the Wren!
 It spake of one, a child of Penury,
 In whose veins ran red blood as beautiful
 As pulses of the purple wine; his song
 As the full gushes of a ripening soul—
 Rare music drops wrung out by anguish from
 A heart sphered with humanity, a-flush
 With inward Spring, and drunk with love of this
 Dear World. One that made Fate a menial,
 And with a holy purpose in his soul,
 Rose from obscurity above his peers
 Like a full moon that leaves a dismal swamp
 And sits in heaven 'mong the stars and night!

Not long I waited for the winds to waft
 This freighted soul o'er the Atlantic wave ;
 For soon the Western Hemisphere bursts forth
 In murmurs, like a Memnon touched at morn.
 And well I knew that proud Columbia hailed
 Another son of song, and stretched her hands
 To laurel him. His Book came ; and I felt
 The Passion that ran through it like a vein,
 Was born of Genius, and that the skill
 Which flung his fevered being into song,
 Would write his name upon the hearts of men
 In characters Time's finger cannot blot.

I read and read until my heart was flushed
 With a new pleasure ; a diviner Light
 Came on me, and its golden fingers touched
 My being into tears, as the lightning
 Breaks a cloud and ravishes its wealth of
 Rain. I read and read, and tho' my eyes grew
 Dim with weariness, my soul still thirsted
 For those draughts of thought inspiring as
 Wine!

And all one summer day I bent above
 His book, like a pale lily o'er a stream,
 And saw my own heart-fancies mirrored on
 His page with wilder beauty. . . .

I read and read until the day and dusk
 In married colors flooded through the blinds,
 And darkness laid his black hand on the page.
 And with the taper burning at my side,
 The Midnight came upon me ere I'd done
 With stars like drops of fire upon her breast !
 I turned to look at them and wondered why
 Such God-like beauty doomed the sinful world.
 I thought of those great souls that, dying, leave
 Behind the shadow of their godliness ;
 Who wrestled all their lives with some great
 Wrong,
 As Jacob did with the mysterious
 Angel one long still night at Penue!.
 Dear God ! when will Contention come and sleep
 In the soft lap of Peace ? And when shall
 Right
 Throw off its galling chains, as in the spring
 The brooks leap from their icy manacles
 With an exuberance of joy ? Dear God !
 When this is so, shall not the Sun go down
 Upon the world with a great flushing light,
 And rise amid a chorus of the stars
 In Paradise ?

H O P E.

AN EXCERPT FROM AN ANCIENTE RIME.

WHEN from darke chaos was create ye earthe,
 When firsté ye sun glowed from its heighte,
 When Nature gave ye pond'rous mountains
 birthe,
 And peerless Daye succeeded lovelie Nighte,
 When planates glowed tho' brighte in day, ye
 colde
 Dotted ye mantle stretched from pole to pole.

'Twas then that Hope with calm cerulean eye,
 Ne decked in statelie robes of Pride,
 Descended from her throne on highe
 And sought alike ye rich and poor man's side,
 To soothe his woe and bluntkeen miserie's
 barbe,
 And clothe ye Future in a brighter garbe.

She woke ye slumbering Genius, bade him rise ;
 From Sorrow's eye she wiped ye falling tear,
 Smiled sweetlie on Ambition's soaring eyes,
 And hovered even o'er Death's gloomy bier.
 Who ceased to smile she bade them smile
 agayne
 And in *anticipation*, banished present payne !

LILLYAN.

O, dreamy-eyèd maiden !
 With Peri beauty laden,
 Lillyan ! did thy southern skies
 Blend those sea-shell dyes
 On thy soft cheeks, Lillyan ?

Lillyan sits through April noons
 In the shadow of the eaves
 Twining flowerets in her hair :
 I would be the crumpled leaves
 On the breast of Lillyan !
 Dainty Lady Lillyan.
 Her sweet face haunts me where I rove,
 Her sunny glances bless me,
 Her gentler smiles caress me,
 And, O ! my soul's a-flush with love
 Of that sad gipsy, Lillyan.

Lillyan in a place of flowers
 Slept one summer day ;
 Lillyan did not hear my footsteps
 As I passed that way ;
 And, I wis,
 I planted a long nectared kiss
 Upon the lips of Lillyan,
 The rare-ripe lips of Lillyan !

And she oped her frightened eyes
 With a glance of scorn,
 For the proudest little Lady
 That was ever born
 Is this self-same Lillyan,
 This dainty darling Lillyan.

Like a shattered April rainbow
 Up the skies, I saw the blood go
 Through the cheeks of Lillyan ;
 And then kneeling at her feet,
 “ Did the kiss I gave thee, Sweet,
 Fall on those red lips with such pain ? ”
 She said “ Yes ! take it back again. ”—
 O ! that roguish Lillyan.

I have been thinking of you
 and of the many things you
 have done for me, and I
 am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.
 I am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.
 I am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.

IV. SCENE OF BLANCHETTE.

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 and of the many things you
 have done for me, and I
 am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.
 I am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.
 I am sure that you will
 be very kind to me.

The first of these is the fact that the
 system of taxation is not uniform
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BLANCHETTE.

SCENE IV. A road by the church-yard of ELD ; the town and the Castles of CRAIGE and EDENWOLD seen in the distance.—
BLANCHETTE and IVAN sitting near the gate.

BLANCHETTE.

Wilt thou not
Finish, Ivan, the sad tale that thou wert
Telling me last eve ? I feel my path
Has been a bridge of flowers, when I think
Of thy captivity.

IVAN.

Where left I off ?

BLANCHETTE.

'Twas where they dragged thee in a noisome
cave

After the battle, faint with heavy chains,
And streaked with thine own blood.

IVAN.

O, let the Past
Sleep in a shroud! Why should we ever strew
The thorns of olden sorrows on our way—
The memory of wilted hopes—when joys
Of present blossoming, like roses, wait
For plucking?

BLANCHETTE.

It is these sombre phases
Of our lives that make the bright seem brighter.
In the soft blending of the light and shade
All of the limner's cunning lies. We find
No joy till we have had a twilight on
The heart. We cannot see the sun, 'less
It is partly dimmed with clouds, for it would
Dazzle us. And if bliss should, like rivers,
Ever through our beings leap, we would grow
Surfeited and sick, like pet canaries
Fed on lucious sweets. Is it not so?

IVAN.

O, thou canst see God's hand in sunshine and
In shade ! To thee, whose spirit wears on earth
A pure touch of heaven's divinity,
Those things are plain, that unto coarser souls
Seem swathed in darkness. O my better heart !
My soul-philosopher ! teach me thy faith,
Thy subtle faith, that sees in every wo
An Angel masking or a Joy disguised !

BLANCHETTE.

Wilt thou not tell the tale ? 'Tis such a one
As should be told at sunset, when the clouds
Turn their flushed faces on departing day,
And then grow sad and sadder by degrees,
As the great orb hides underneath the earth !
Tell me it quickly ! or the dusk will set
Its signet on the zenith, and the night
Will cap it with a moon.

IVAN.

'Twas a great cave
Where sunbeams never were, and night and day
Were one ; full of dark precipices,
Yawning and moaning ever, and deep streams

Writhing and squirming, like black serpents,
 'mong

Stalagmites centuries old. Echo roamed
 Through all the caverns like a demon king,
 With lips brimful of startling cadences.
 In the unearthly light of burning brands,
 Forms, more horrible than those of Comus
 And his crew, dug in the rocky-veined ribs
 And in the bowels of their prison house,
 Bringing forth precious jewels. Men were there
 Who never saw the sun, nor felt the breath
 Of evening on their cheeks. Born in that realm
 Of Cerberus, at tales of planates poised
 In viewless air; earth's ragged cloak of snow;
 The Sister Months, and crystal tides, and ships
 They'd ope their eyes with wonderment; and
 birds

With hearts of melody were myths to them.
 Here did I dwell the long and lonely years;
 The hours went by as slow and sombrely
 As funeral trains—each bore a dead hope
 With it. Even now, in this rich moment
 Of serenest bliss, the thoughts of that drear
 Cave, fall on my heart like clouds, darkening it.
 I'll not let these cold and clammy mem'ries
 Finger the guilt from off this golden hour!
 No more! no more! I'm all too weary, love,
 Of this dark episode in my heart's Life!

BLANCHETTE.

What! leave it all unfinished like a strain
 Of music broken by the wind? Oh, no!
 Tell what kind angel took thee by the hand
 And through those palaces, stalactite hung,
 Led thee to rosy daylight and to me.

IVAN.

An angel! Ah, thou sayest rightly, for
 It was. If ever God sent angel to
 This earth, Madene was one. A miner's child,
 Born in the rocky navel of that cave,
 She grew up with strange thoughts, wild joys,
 and tears
 Ran thro' her being like rare music thro'
 A dream. Her soul lay in her hazel eyes
 Like a white lily in a brook. There was
 An atmosphere of purity around
 Her, and of love, a tenderness, a grace
 That loving nature robed her with, not art.
 She was a star in that dark spot, a light
 Gilding the darkness.

BLANCHETTE.

And you loved her?

IVAN.

Very much. She nursed me in my sickness
 With the gentlest care, and sang low songs
 And soothed me like a child. 'Tis not 'mid
 thrones

And palaces we find the noblest hearts.
 Costlier diamonds are hid in the earth
 Than ever yet have decked a coronal.
 In the lone paths and by-ways of this world,
 Souls, rich in their own wealth, spring up and
 die

Like flowerets unnoticed. She was one
 That shall make heaven beautiful, and earth
 Is lovelier while she lives. Through weary,
 Weary nights and days o' pain she tended me.
 When strength returned, my grateful lips were
 filled

With language; but how beggared 'twas to
 clothe

The promptings of my soul. I spoke to her
 Of "home"—"dear home" framed like a pic-
 ture in

My thought; of one that waited for me, with
 Heart-trembles and most anxious eyes; and she
 Would drink my words in with a thirsty ear.
 When thro' the toil of day, I'd sit me down
 Upon the margent of some inky stream,

Hearing it echo through the dull deaf caves,
 She'd find me ever, and sit at my feet.
 Once, as I told her of thee, Blanch, starting
 From out a seeming reverie, she cried,
 "Tell me no more of this dark-tressèd one !
 I love thee, stranger of the outer world !
 Have loved since first our glances met ; my
 mouth
 Has burned upon thy forehead in thy sleep ;
 Mine eyes have fed on thee while wrapped in
 dreams !"

"O, say not so," I whispered, "say not so !
 Thou art much dearer to me than my life ;
 'Twere thine could it but serve thee ;—but my
 love—

I beg thee do not ask it." Her hand fell
 Coldly on my own. "'Twas a wild, wild
 dream,"

She said, "but over now. We will no more
 Of it. From this time forward I have one
 Great aim in life—thy liberty ; for she
 Thou lovest must be worthy thee." I could
 Have worshiped her, so full of holiness
 She seemed, so full of paradise. Blanchette,
 I do believe this world is linked to that
 Next better world by souls like her's.

BLANCHETTE.

And I.

She must have fallen through the fingers of
 The angels, (never meant for earth) into
 That cave ; and they, mayhap, have ever since
 Been searching for her. I am listening.

IVAN.

'Twas two years after this she came one night
 And drew me from a labyrinth of dreams.
 "Come," she spoke wildly, "I have seen a
 light,
 Not like the torches that we use, but soft
 And clear and lovely as an eye." We went.
 It was a star she saw glimmering through
 A rupture in the rock, half hidden by
 A fallen tree, and creeping vines, and leaves
 Of many summer times. My heart was full.
 I felt Æolus' lips upon my brow,
 And I could hear, among the trees without,
 The wind's wild symphonies. I turned to bless
 Her—she was gone. Men hurried to and fro
 In the rotunda of the cave with lights.
 My absence was discovered ; at a bound
 I gained the opening, and thrust back the leaves,
 And stood out in the night—glorious night !

Peopled with planate worlds! The river
crossed,

I hid me in the woods, and cooled my lips
With mangos, sweetest fruit Pomona hangs
Upon the trees. I slept in shady glens
By day, and traveled under covert of
The night. The war had broken out afresh.
I joined my comrades on a battle eve;
Once more I led them in victorious
Charge. The fame, the wealth, the rank
I won, I lay them at thy feet! * * * *

(An hour later, sunset; a mist seen on the mountains.)

BLANCHETTE.

The birds are mute, and all the winding streams,
With pebbly eyes, flow on subdued. The woods
Are spotted o'er with carmine, ribbed with gold,
And the great sun goes rippling down the West!

IVAN.

And Twilight, like some dark Egyptian Queen,
Stalks down the mountain side!

BLANCHETTE.

Soon Night will come,
Cloud-capped and starry-eyed, with Saturn,
Mars
And Venus in her train !

IVAN.

How like a dream
It is ! The town below us slumbering
In the dusk, and the faint throbbing of its
Many hearts ; the mournful curfew stealing
On the night, and the sweet bulbul singing
To the rose ; and thou, my love, thou seemest
The most unreal of all.

BLANCHETTE.

There is a sad,
Dim beauty in the scene that touches me.
Morn walking o'er the coral-grottoed deep,
Is not so 'witching as the dreamy haze
That cloaks this landscape ; and I would not
match
One scintillation of mild Hesperus
'Gainst all his amber beams. The village lamps
Are lighted ; darkness screens the chimney-tops,

The carven gables ; nought is visible
 Save twinkling lamps, except when some gude-
 wife

The window curtain lifts, and watches for
 Her husband ; then a gleam of light runs out,
 Spanning the darkness like a fairy bridge !

IVAN.

And Castle Craige, looms 'mid the shadows up,
 With window eyes of fire ; but Edenwold
 Is bleak and gloomy as a blasted tree.
 Come, love, let's leave these quiet, quiet graves ;
 A church-yard is a dismal place at night,
 And we should not be sad. Ere Evening sweeps
 In purple robes again across the sky.
 The sweet-lipped bell that silent, drowsy hangs
 In yon old belfry of the ivied church,
 Shall tune its tongue and chime our marriage
 morn.

To-morrow, love ! to-morrow !

NIGHT SCENE.

ONE cloud was gabled like a country house
 With latticed windows, vine hid, through which
 looked

The melting eyes of stars. From out one side
 Was hung the moon like a great lantern in
 The crowded porch of some quaint village inn!

* * * * The far dim woods
 Were tipped with amethyst; beneath me
 stretched

The town of Eld bespangled with its lights;
 Above me, drooped the linings of the clouds!
 And I could hear, like one in trance, the feet
 Of cascades tripping musically down
 Emerald hills, while ever and anon
 The Nightingale sent trembles thro' the night.





